

Message Text

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SUMMARY: DURING CALL ON DIRECTOR UMRAN OF EGYPTIAN NATCOM FOR UNESCO, VIEWS OF US NATCOM ON CONTINUED COOPERATION WERE CONVEYED. UMRAN EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN UNESCO IN AFTERMATH OF GEN CONF AND CALLED ATTENTION TO RESOLUTION PASSED BY 9TH CONF OF ARAB NATCOMS. EMBASSY WILL ENDEAVOR TO EXPAND DEGREE OF COOPERATION WITH EGYPTIAN NATCOM BY ENCOURAGING US ACADEMICIANS, SCIENTISTS TO CALL ON THAT ORG., AS APPROPRIATE, DURING COURSE OF VISITS TO EGYPT. END SUMMARY.

1. POL/ECON COUNSELOR CALLED ON MAHMOUD UMRAN, DIRECTOR EGYPTIAN NATCOM MAY 13 AND TOOK OPPORTUNITY AGAIN TO CONVEY COMMENTS REFTEL WHICH HAD EARLIER BEEN TRANSMITTED BY PHONE.

2. UMRAN SAID HE APPRECIATED US NATCOM'S DESIRE TO EXPAND COOPERATION. HE FELT IT PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT AT THIS JUNCTURE THAT COOPERATION BE INCREASED. EGYPTIAN NATCOM VALUED TRANSLATION ACTIVITIES RELATED TO WORLD
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LINK WITH US NATCOM. UMRAN WAS CONCERNED ABOUT AFTERMATH OF UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCE LAST FALL AND US CONGRESSIONAL ACTION CURTAILING FUNDS. COUNSELOR RESPONDED THAT FOR MANY YEARS US HAS FOUGHT BATTLE IN GENERAL CONFERENCES AND EXBD SESSIONS TO KEEP POLITICAL ISSUES OUT OF UNESCO. FAILURE TO DO SO INVARIABLY CREATED PROBLEMS AND INDEED SUCH IS CASE NOW.

3. UMRAN SAID THAT AT RECENT 9TH CONF OF ARAB NATCOMS IN SANAA MAY 5-12, FROM WHICH HE HAD JUST RETURNED, RESOLUTION WAS PASSED SUPPORTING ARAB LEAGUE EDUCATIONAL, SCIENCE AND CULTURAL ORG (ALECSO) RESOLUTION OF JAN 30, 1975. ALECSO RESOLUTION CALLS FOR "ALL FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS AND OAU TO EXERT EFFORTS TO APPROACH COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE TAKEN DECISION CONCERNING PAYMENT OF UNESCO CONTRIBUTIONS TO REVISE THEIR STANDS." COUNSELOR AGAIN POINTED OUT IMPORTANCE OF MEMBER STATES AVOIDING ACTIONS WITHIN UNESCO WHICH BRING ABOUT CONFRONTATIONS HAVING POLITICAL OVERTONES. UNESCO SHOULD BE VEHICLE FOR BRIDGING GAP AND PROVIDING MEANS FOR COOPERATION AMONG NATIONS EVEN WHEN OTHER VEHICLES FAIL.

4. UMRAN AGAIN MADE POINT OF INDICATING HOW COMMUNIST STATES WERE ENDEAVORING TO WOO ARABS THROUGH UNESCO AND THAT EVERY LITTLE BIT US NATCOM COULD DO TO ENHANCE COOPERATION WOULD BE APPRECIATED. UMRAN DECLARED "EGYPT PLAYS A CENTRAL ROLE AND WILL DO WHAT IT CAN TO HELP."

5. COUNSELOR INQUIRED WHETHER EGYPTIAN NATCOM WAS INVOLVED IN GOE ACTIVITIES RELATED TO US/EGYPTIAN JOINT WORKING GROUPS ON CULTURE AND ON TECHNOLOGY, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT. A GOOD DEAL OF BILATERAL COOPERATIVE ACTIVITY HAS BEEN GOING FORWARD IN THESE AREAS. UMRAN SAID EGYPTIAN NATCOM HAD NOT BEEN PLUGGED INTO THESE EFFORTS TO DATE.

6. COMMENT: EMBASSY WILL ENDEAVOR TO BRING EGYPTIAN NATCOM MORE FULLY INTO BILATERAL COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES BY ENCOURAGING, AS APPROPRIATE, US ACADEMICIANS, SCIENTISTS, ETC., INVOLVED IN OTHER EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL PROJECTS, TO CALL ON EGYPTIAN NATCOM DURING COURSE OF THEIR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VISITS TO EGYPT. FLOW OF SUCH VISITORS, PARTICULARLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH SPECIAL FOREIGN CURRENCY PROGRAM ACTIVITIES, FOR EXAMPLE, IS CONSIDERABLE. WHILE OBVIOUSLY NOT ALL ASPECTS ARE GERMANE, CONTACTS WITH SOME OF THESE VISITORS MAY GENERATE AVENUES OF COOPERATION NOT PREVIOUSLY ENVISAGED. EILTS

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